

Dissertation Abstracts

Trinity International University

Title: A Malawian Seventh-day Adventist Theology of Wealth and Poverty and Missiological Implications

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This dissertation seeks to give voice to a select group of Malawian Seventh-day Adventists in rural northern Malawi, Africa as they reflect on their theology of wealth and poverty. The basic research concern was that African Christianity is poorly understood by the global church and that this hinders Christian global mission.

The research was done at Lunjika Secondary School in Malawi, Africa. The research group was composed of eight people, four men and four women, equally divided on the basis of education. The researcher met with each person for eight interviews of one hour. The researcher is an American missionary who

has lived in Malawi for about 30 years.

Two typologies were used to locate the theological reflections of the group within global Christianity—David T. Williams' typology of *Christian approaches to poverty* (Williams 2001) and Terrance Tiessen's ten models of Christian theology (Tiessen 2000, *Providence and prayer: How does God work in the world?*).

The research occurred in the wake of a serious famine and the subjects painted a vivid picture of serious poverty. Topics that emerged included evolving concepts of ownership, causes of poverty, causes of wealth, relationships between poor and rich, gender relationships, and the role of government. Word studies led to the identification of the social theme of "finding," which contrasts with the American theme of "having." The subjects forthrightly described the role of envy in their society and saw it as a major spiritual issue.

The subjects were asked to bring biblical texts that were either helpful or challenging in their understanding of poverty. One of the troubling texts was Gen 9:18-25, about Noah's curse, that has been applied to Africa.

Using the Williams typology, the group's model could be described as the "Charity in Community with Self-Limitation and Trusting Faith" model. As for Tiessen's typology, the group was faithful to their Anabaptist, Seventh-day Adventist roots in the Wesleyan-Arminian tradition, although giving divine determination of wealth and poverty a little more emphasis than Americans would.

A number implications are drawn from the research for the enhancement of mutual relationships for the sake of Christian global mission.

Andrews University, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: Leadership Development in Albania: Equipping Young Pastors for Apostolic Leadership

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Albania opened to Christian missions in 1992. The church is new and the pastors are young and with limited experience. Initial rapid growth has been followed by slow decline. Leadership and leadership development is in the hands of foreign missionaries with limited experience in Albania. There is a need to develop cultur-

ally-appropriate, apostolic leadership for a country with a predominantly Muslim population.

Library research, questionnaires, interviews, and observations were conducted to develop an understanding of the Project Director, the Albanian culture, a theology of leadership and church, and methods in leadership development. An appreciative inquiry approach was used to create and implement a plan for developing apostolic leadership.

Apostolic leadership was chosen as the preferred leadership model to plant the church in this recently-entered country. An appreciative inquiry summit was conducted that successfully partnered young Albanians with experienced foreign missionaries in creating a preferred pattern for leadership. A plan was partially developed and implemented. There is greater confidence and enthusiasm in leadership but the process is at an early stage of implementation. If proven to be effective, this approach will help develop apostolic leadership in the current pastors of the Albanian Church and provide for future generations of leaders.

An apostolic leadership approach created through appreciative inquiry will increase the effectiveness of the leadership of the Albanian Church. It affirms the skills and experience of the Albanian pastors and creates ownership through participation. Apostolic leadership will increase the health and growth of the church.